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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/036,787	10/19/2001	Takayuki Toshima	199372003600	5431

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EXAMINER

CULBERT, ROBERTS P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1763

DATE MAILED: 10/23/2002

7

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/036,787

Applicant(s)

TOSHIMA ET AL.

Examiner

Roberts Culbert

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 August 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 7.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-7, drawn to a method, classified in class 216, subclass 83.
- II. Claims 8-16, drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 134, subclass 50. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I. and II. are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand. For example, a controller is not needed to drive the ozone water supply, as this task could be accomplished manually. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation between Examiner Sylvia MacArthur and applicant's attorney/agent Mehran Arjomand on 10/02/02 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-7. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 8-16 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must

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be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by the admitted prior art. In the description of the related art, applicant discloses known methods for processing a substrate wafer with a resist pattern and an oxidation film. The known process steps include etching the oxidation film with a chemical liquid (Page 1 Lines 22-25), washing and drying (Page 1 Line 25). Further, it is known to rinse the wafer with ozone water after the etching step to produce a hydrophilic surface and prevent water marks (Page 1 Lines 30-33). Therefore the admitted prior art teaches all of the limitations of claims 1 and 5.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Konuma. As applied above, the admitted prior art discloses the method of the invention substantially as claimed, but does not teach ozone water concentration in the range 0.5-10ppm. Konuma teaches that a hydrophilic (increased wetting) surface may be obtained on a resist-patterned substrate by using ozone water in the range 0.1 to 20ppm (Col. 5 Lines 30-33). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the range specified by Konuma during the ozone water rinsing step of the claimed invention in order to produce a hydrophilic surface.

Claims 2, 3, 6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Kamikawa et al. As applied above, the admitted prior art discloses the method of the invention substantially as claimed, but does not teach the use of drying with a dry gas or by rotation of the substrate (spin drying). Kamikawa et al. teaches that solvent drying, spin drying, and spraying a dry gas such as N₂ are well-known methods for drying a wafer after cleaning (Col. 1 Lines 21-32). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use any of the drying methods suggested by Kamikawa et al. for the purpose of drying the wafer in the method of the claimed invention because Kamikawa et al. teaches that solvent drying, spin drying, and spraying a dry gas such as N₂ are art-recognized equivalents for the purpose of drying a wafer, and it has been held that substitution of one art-recognized equivalent for another is prima facie obvious. *In re Fout*, 297, 213 USPQ 532 (CCPA 1982).

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Roberts Culbert whose telephone number is (703) 305-7965. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (7:30-4:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Mills can be reached on (703) 308-1633. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

October 17, 2002


GREGORY MILLS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700